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ABSTRACT

This report builds on the Textbook Report done in 1963 by the American Economic Association (AEA). The "new look" assumes three tasks: 1) to determine whether current texts show improvements; 2) to go beyond minimum type evaluative criteria in the AEA report and develop a standardized economics textbook evaluation procedure; and, 3) to identify innovative developments in acceptable texts. An introductory section of the report discusses the AEA report. A second section views the 12 texts selected for the present analysis on the basis of criteria and evidence comparable to the AEA Report. Individual texts are not identified. The third section considers the rationale for some extended criteria and a standardized evaluation procedure. An exploratory classification and sample set of extended criteria are presented in Section IV. These criteria are then utilized to classify the innovative developments identified in five selected second-generation texts. Some of the concluding observations: 1) high school economics texts as a group have been substantially upgraded; 2) the quality of acceptable texts now runs strongly ahead of the typical teacher's preparation in economics; and, 3) all the acceptable texts shared the common virtue (and implied defect) of being appropriate for the above average, academic strata of students. (Author/JLB)

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A NEW LOOK AT THE HIGH SCHOOL ECONOMICS TEXTS

by

Norman Townshend-Zellner

with the assistance of Edwin R. Carr

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A NEW LOOK AT THE HIGH SCHOOL ECONOMICS TEXTS *

by

Norman Townshend-Zellner **

with the assistance of Edwin R. Carr ***

The phrase, "a new look," implies a "prior look." Just 10 years ago, in a benchmark study,[1] the American Economic Association's Committee on Economic Education took their first formal look at the high school economics texts. From the point of view of an academic economist, the sight could be summed up in one word: "appalling."

Our "new look" will assume three tasks. First, we shall determine whether current texts have shown any improvement, and, if so, describe the improvements and explain why they occurred. Second, we shall develop two current policy-needs: (1) to go beyond the "minimum"-type evaluative criteria developed in the AEA Report to "extended"-criteria; and (2) to develop a standardized economics textbook evaluation procedure for high schools and their academic consultants. Third, we shall identify innovative developments appearing in what we have evaluated as an "acceptable" group of current texts.

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[1] "Economics in the Schools. A Report by a Special Textbook Study Committee of the Committee on Economic Education of the American Economic Association." American Economic Review, Vol. LIII, No. 1, Part 2, Supplement, March, 1963.

I. The AEA Textbook Report

Background

The AEA Textbook Report didn't "just happen"; it occurred as part of a carefully conceived national economic education movement. In the foreword to the Report, Ben Lewis, Chairman of the AEA Committee on Economic Education, stated that the Report was "...part of a large-scale attack on economic illiteracy which has enlisted the support and cooperation of economists, educators, businessmen, and labor leaders."[2] The economic education effort is based on the knowledge that "...a democracy thrives on an informed electorate and... that an increasing proportion of political decisions are essentially economic in consequence, if not always in intent..."[3] The AEA, through its Committee on Economic Education, recognized the special responsibility of the economics profession in this area, and the textbook study is only one among a number of companion projects "...designed to increase the economic understanding of the nation's citizenry."[4] The aim of the AEA Report was to find out, by examining the economic content of high school textbooks, "...just what 'economics in the schools' amounts to today."[5] This knowledge, in turn, would furnish a basic guide for further economic education programs. The hope was expressed that "...one result of the present report will be an improvement in the quality of textbooks purporting to bring economic understanding to our future citizens."[6]

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[2] Ibid., p.iii.

[3] Ibid., p.iii.

[4] Ibid., p.iii.

[5] Ibid., p.iv.

[6] Ibid., p.v.

Methodology

The overall Textbook Study Committee Report, authored by Paul R. Olson, was based on the review of textbooks by three 4-man subcommittees. One subcommittee was assigned the task of reviewing textbooks used in the high school economics course. Another subcommittee reviewed texts used in the U.S. History course, and the third, texts in the Social Problems course. Our concern in this paper is exclusively with the report of the subcommittee on the economics texts, and those aspects of the overall committee Report reflecting the findings on economics texts.

The economics text subcommittee reviewed eight texts. Four of these were "leading" textbooks on the basis of publishers' rankings in terms of sales volume. Four other texts were selected without reference to sales volume. All four members of the subcommittee reviewed each of the 4 leading texts; each of the other four texts selected was reviewed by one subcommittee member. Each subcommittee member wrote a single report on the five books he examined. Following discussion of the written evaluations, the subcommittee chairman prepared the statement of findings published as the subcommittee report. The overall committee Report, as published, was prepared from the three subcommittee reports.

Criteria

The subcommittee evaluated the texts "...as economists seeking to determine the scope and nature of the economic content of the books and to consider their adequacy in terms of that minimal economic understanding

necessary to good citizenship."[7] The standard of minimal economic understanding employed in evaluating the texts was "...consistent with that later set forth in the National Task Force Report, Economic Education in the Schools..."[8] The criteria for evaluation adopted by the overall committee and used by the economics text subcommittee were:

1. "The principal objective of high school education in economics should be good citizenship, not the preparation of students for a college major in economics.

2. Economics is a social science and emphasis should be placed on the interdependence of decision-makers and the operation of economic systems, not on the solution of problems of the individual.

3. The economic understanding sought should concern vital matters, not trivia; and the coverage of these should be balanced, including (as examples) macro- and micro-economics, the generation of change in a system as well as its static operation, and international as well as domestic problems.

4. The approach to economic matters should be essentially analytical, though larded heavily with factual and descriptive material on economic institutions and their development.

5. The nature of value judgments should be explained; whenever relevant they should be identified; and the role they play in shaping economic systems, policies, and controversies should be clearly stated. Controversial issues should not be avoided, but used to stimulate interest and to distinguish between facts, value judgments, and impartial analysis as these apply to vital matters.

6. Factual and analytical errors should be kept to a minimum."[9]

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[7] Ibid., p.viii.

[8] Ibid., p.viii.

[9] Ibid., p.viii.

Comment on Committee Criteria and Methodology

The criteria used by the economics text subcommittee were appropriate to what must have appeared to be a veritable economic wasteland. The criteria adopted focused on setting a minimum "floor" (acceptable to most academic economists) under the content, approach, and objectives of the economics texts. The "minimum" nature of the criteria is reflected in their generality and broad scope, e.g., the principal objective should be "good citizenship"; the approach should be "essentially analytical"; the economic understanding sought should concern "vital matters, not trivia"; coverage of vital matters should be "balanced". In our judgment, the committee priorities were correct. Ten years ago, ideal high school economics textbooks and a corresponding set of extended, as well as minimal, criteria for evaluation were well in the future. The task then was to set the house in order via minimum acceptable criteria.

A 3-stage methodology in text-evaluation is implicitly developed in the subcommittee report. We feel this should be made explicit, for the following stages are at the heart of the evaluation process:

Stage 1. Development of criteria by which the text is to be judged, or assessed.

Stage 2. Objective inquiry, examination, marshalling of evidence, etc., relative and germane to the text's fulfillment of the criteria.

Stage 3. Judgmental decision-making involving the objective evidence adduced in relation to the criteria, resulting in the specific evaluation of the text.

Findings

The summary evaluation in the overall committee Report reveals a bleak picture:

> It is the committee's considered opinion that the high school student whose knowledge of economics has been acquired through courses circumscribed by the textbooks principally used in the three social studies courses (including economics) would be quite unprepared to cope understandingly with most problems of economic public policy.[10]

In its summary evaluation, the economics textbook subcommittee restated the following criteria:

> The textbooks should be primarily concerned with the functions and operation of the economic system...The treatment should be balanced in terms of coverage, but not so extensive as to sacrifice analysis for trivial description. Controversy should not be introduced for its own sake, but when related to critical issues should be handled fully and analytically. It was hoped that the economic system would be analyzed in terms of effectiveness in enhancing the general welfare... [11]

The subcommittee finding was that: "None of the books examined measured up to these criteria..." [12]

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[10] Ibid., p. ix.

[11] Ibid., p.1.

[12] Ibid., p.1. But the subcommittee added the qualifier: "...but the subcommittee hastens to point out that few college texts would pass (these criteria) with flying colors."

II. Evaluation of Current High School Economics Texts on the Basis of Criteria and Evidence Comparable to the AEA Report

Methodology

Selection of current texts for evaluation.--Our selection of texts was based on a Spring 1969 institute on textbook analysis for teachers of the high school economics course in the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area, encompassing Los Angeles and Orange Counties. The twelve textbooks selected for evaluation included all texts in current school use by our institute group of teachers. In addition, we added several newly published texts which had not yet had time to find their way into current usage. All texts in the group, with one possible exception, were issued by major, nation-wide publishing houses. We selected only texts bearing a post-1963 publication date, and in case of multiple editions we chose the most recent one. For purposes of selection, we defined texts narrowly, omitting "supplementary" books, and books not within the standard text format and scope. We evaluated only the texts, omitting materials published to accompany the text.[13]

Age and lineage of texts selected.--Of the twelve texts selected, five were published in 1968 and 1969; four were published in 1966 and 1967; and the remaining three in 1964 and 1965.

Eight of the twelve texts were new entrants, with no previous editions. All five of the 1968-69 texts were included in this group. Of the four texts

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[13]Actually, these materials warrant examination and evaluation, but we are forced to enter the plea of "scarce resources."

representing a second or later edition, two had original editions published in 1959 and 1960; one original edition went back to the middle '50's; and one to the late '40's.

Comparability of current texts with AEA Report texts.--We feel the twelve texts selected are reasonably comparable to the AEA Report texts in representing a dominant percentage of texts in current national usage. We checked our sample of texts against an Annotated Bibliography of Economic Textbooks published in September, 1969, by the Ohio Council on Economic Education which included, according to the writer, "...all of the standard high school texts known to us...".[14] In terms of our selection standards, twelve of the sixteen texts listed in this bibliography are included in our sample. Edward C. Prehn in his book, Teaching High School Economics,[15] published in 1968, speaks of "...the dozen textbooks now in use..." and lists six as "...best reflect(ing) the influence of the Task Force Report..." All six of these happen to be included in our sample of twelve. In a 1969 survey[16] of public and private high schools in the State of New York, the New York State Council on Economic Education listed four texts as "...used most often." Our sample of twelve texts includes three of these texts.

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[14] Annotated Bibliography of Economics Textbooks, Study Units, and Films for Use in High Schools. Ohio Council on Economic Education, Athens, Ohio, September 1969, p.1.

[15] Prehn, Edward C. Teaching High School Economics. New York: Pitman, 1968, p.102.

[16] High School Texts in Economics Used in New York State Schools, New York State Council on Economic Education, Albany, 1969.

In addition, by including in our sample the new-entrant 1968-69 texts, we feel our texts represent not only the most widely used texts, but also what is happening at the cutting edge of text development. To sum up, we see no reason for serious doubt that we are evaluating the state of affairs with respect to the high school economics text roughly ten years after the 1959-60 AEA study. Let us now compare the current texts with the AEA Report texts of a decade ago.

Comparative Evaluation of Current and 1959-60 Textbooks,[17] by Individual Criteria

The comparative evaluation is based on selected criteria employed in the AEA Report. Where possible we use, for comparative evaluation, evidence from the current texts identical to that used in the AEA Report. The evaluation of current texts has been carried out entirely by the authors of this paper.

A. Criteria: Coverage

A-1. Treatment of aggregative economics and the problems of instability

1959-60 Texts

The evidence marshalled by the AEA economics subcommittee showed that:

> ...the emphasis in all of these books is on micro-economics, with only one book (out of eight) dealing at all seriously with aggregative economics and the problem of instability. The one exception offers a good chapter on the measurement of national income and the circular flow of economic activity. But even

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[17] For simplicity we designate the AEA Report texts as 1959-60 texts, since they were "current" in 1959-60, the time of the study. Actually, just as our "current" texts have publication dates going back as far as 1964, it is likely that many of the 1959-60 texts have publication dates going back several years prior to 1959. It also should be noted that although the Report was prepared during 1959-60, its publication date was March, 1963.

SUMMARY TABLE

Evaluation of Twelve Current Texts on the basis of

Criteria Used in the AEA Textbook Report

Criteria	Evaluation			
	Eight 1959-60 Texts		Twelve Current Texts	
	Ade-quate	Inade-quate	Ade-quate	Inade-quate
A. Coverage				
A-1. Treatment of aggregative economics and the problems of instability	0	8	6	6
A-2. Role of government.	0[a]	8[a]	6	6
A-3. Treatment of growth and change	0	8	5	7
A-4. Treatment of the insatiability of human wants and the scarcity of resources to satisfy them.	0[a]	8[a]	8	4
A-5. Treatment of economics as a social science omitting emphasis on the solution of problems of the individual (as consumer or producer)	0[a]	8[a]	6	6
A-6. Avoidance of disproportionate attention to individual topics.	0[a]	8[a]	7	5
B. Role of analysis vs. description	0[a]	8[a]	12[b]	0
C. Quality and competence of analysis	0[a]	8[a]	6	6
D. Concern with system-orientation and system-content	0	8	6	6
E. Value judgments and controversy	0	8	5	7

a. No precise figure given, but implication was given that all texts were inadequate.

b. Note, however, the qualifying footnote on page 26.

A. Criteria: Coverage (continued)

A-1. Treatment of aggregative economics and the problems of instability (continued)

> this treatment of instability and its causes impressed all members of the subcommittee as inadequate. In other books fiscal policies and central banking policies receive even less attention. [18]

The AEA subcommittee report stated that there has been "...neglect of the aggregative approach and of the problem of instability..." [19] The AEA overall Report stated that: "Perhaps the most glaring of these ('topics which are either slighted or omitted entirely') is the aggregative approach to economics which is inadequately presented, if touched on at all." [20]

Twelve Current Texts

We found substantial improvement among the current texts; six of the twelve adequately fulfilled the AEA Report criteria.

All twelve texts treated aggregative economics and the problem of instability. Eight of the twelve texts devoted an entire unit to macro-economics. (On the average, each of the books contained about seven units.) In terms of pure coverage, then, the current texts showed strong improvement.

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[18] "Economics in the Schools...", op.cit., p.3.

[19] Ibid., p.3.

[20] Ibid., p.ix.

However, the quality and adequacy of treatment were deficient in many of the texts. We developed three content criteria--with respect to analytically oriented treatment of aggregative economics and the problem of instability. Does the text contain: (1) introductory material, including measurement of national income; (2) treatment of the determination of the level of income; and (3) treatment of fiscal and central banking policies? Absence of a unit on macro-economics turned out to be an index of total or glaring omission in treatment. One of the four books without a special unit on macro-economics omitted treatment of all three content - criteria; the other three texts omitted explicit treatment of the determination of the level of national income, and either omitted or gave marginal treatment to the other criteria. Of the eight books containing a specific unit on macro-economics, six showed adequate treatment in terms of the three selected criteria. It is interesting to note that of the six books with adequate treatment, only one used a graphic model of income determination. In the other books the explanation was verbal.

A. Criteria: Coverage (continued)

A-2. Role of Government

1959-60 Texts

The AEA subcommittee report evaluated the role of government as being treated inadequately, stating that "...the role of government in the economy is discussed in only a very limited sense."[21] The section of the report in which the role of government is evaluated carried the title: "The Submersion of Aggregates and the Government." (Emphasis added.) In support of this

[21] Ibid., p.3.

A. Criteria: Coverage (continued)

A-2. Role of Government (continued)

1959-60 Texts (continued)

evaluation the AEA subcommittee developed evidence showing that:

a. "...public borrowing and its economic effects are almost completely ignored."[22]

b. "...there is a clear tendency to avoid the discussion of such (government) roles as (1) maintaining stability... (2) furnishing services which cannot be provided efficiently by private enterprise...(or) (3)...that are or could be furnished by the free market but where 'public policy' demands larger or different provision than would be accomplished by the market; (4) modifying the real income distribution by 'welfare' expenditures and by non-proportional taxation..." [23]

c. "...efforts to evaluate the effects of governmental action against established economic criteria such as... efficient allocation (and) full utilization...of resources are noticeable by their absence." [24]

Twelve Current Texts

The twelve current texts show a vast improvement in that the role of government in the economy is discussed not "in only a very limited sense" but to an extensive degree in all twelve texts. Eleven of the twelve texts devote two or more chapters to the role of government; four of the twelve contain a small unit devoted to the role of government. Certainly we can no

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[22] Ibid., p.4.

[23] Ibid., p.4.

[24] Ibid., p.4.

longer speak of the current texts, as did the AEA Report, in terms of "The 'Submersion' of...Government."

Yet, despite the general coverage given the role of government, many of the texts showed deficiencies in quality and adequacy of treatment in terms of the specific criteria raised by the AEA Report. Our evaluation showed only six texts as adequately meeting the AEA Report criteria. Many of the texts inadequately evaluated "the effects of governmental action against established economic criteria such as...efficient allocation (and) full utilization...of resources..." Again, only a few of the texts gave really adequate analysis for understanding government's role of "furnishing services which cannot be provided efficiently by private enterprise...or...where 'public policy' demands larger or different provision than would be accomplished by the market." Many of the texts--although discussing taxation and "welfare" expenditures in detail--gave no explicit recognition to, or discussion of, the government's role in "modifying the real income distribution by 'welfare' expenditures and by non-proportional taxation." Although all texts treated public borrowing and its economic effects, the analysis and treatment were inadequate in about half of the texts.

A. Criteria: Coverage (continued)

A-3. Treatment of growth and change

1959-60 Texts

The AEA Report evaluated the treatment of growth and change as inadequate, concluding that evidence of treatment of growth and change in the eight texts is only "incidental", with the exception of the discussion of the evolution of

A. Criteria: Coverage (continued)

A-3. Treatment of growth and change (continued)

1959-60 Texts (continued)

economic systems in two of the texts through brief accounts of stages of development proceeding from the primitive areas to the modern industrial period. Evidence cited for the evaluation included the following "...omissions of major importance...": "Investment incentives, determinants of saving, the roles of technological change and population growth in the generation of capacity, and problems of achieving the full utilization of capacity." [25]

Twelve Current Texts

We found substantial improvement in the treatment of growth and change. One text devoted an entire unit of four chapters to the topic of growth, making it a major theme of the book. Two other texts emphasized growth heavily, each devoting two chapters to the topic. Three texts each devoted a chapter to growth. However, five texts gave the topic incidental coverage or virtually omitted it. When the adequacy of analysis is considered, especially in terms of the specific topics mentioned in the AEA Report, we evaluated only five texts as meeting the Report's minimum criteria.

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[25] Ibid., p.4.

A. Criteria: Coverage (continued)

A-4. Treatment of the insatiability of human wants and the scarcity of resources to satisfy them

1959-60 Texts

The AEA economics texts subcommittee evaluated as inadequate the coverage given to the central problem of economics, stating "...the insatiability of human wants and the scarcity of resources to satisfy them are only sketched (by the eight texts), certainly not given the treatment they deserve as the principal reason for economic organization." [26]

Twelve Current Texts

The current texts showed marked improvement in their treatment of this topic. We felt that eight of the texts gave reasonably adequate treatment to the insatiability of human wants and the scarcity of resources to satisfy them. Treatment varied among the eight texts. Two of the texts focused entire chapters on this problem, while three of the texts' treatment was barely adequate. One text quoted at the beginning of a unit a statement from the Report of the National Task Force on the importance of teaching about scarcity. Ironically, this text limited its own treatment to several lines; did not even list the concept, "Scarcity", in its index, and, of course, was evaluated as inadequate in its treatment.

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[26] Ibid., p.5.

A. Criteria: Coverage (continued)

A-5. Treatment of economics as a social science omitting emphasis on the solution of problems of the individual (as consumer or producer)

1959-60 Texts

The evaluation of the AEA economics texts subcommittee was strongly negative on this criterion. The subcommittee agreed "...that these texts go to the extreme of making the consumer as an individual the focus of economics. 'You as an individual buyer or worker' is simply given too much consideration..."[27] Evidence developed showed that too much of the space in these books was "...allocated to the individual, his job, his spending habits, his role in society, and how he should behave...The emphasis on good advice (often exhortation almost to the point of preaching) adds to the apparent overemphasis on the consumer." [28]

Twelve Current Texts

The current texts show marked improvement. We evaluated only six of the twelve texts as strongly overemphasizing the problems of the individual, as defined above by the AEA Report. Four of these texts devoted an entire unit to solving problems of the individual. (One of these books devoted not only four chapters within the special unit, but also an additional chapter earlier in the book.) The other two texts devoted the equivalent of two chapters each to the problem of the individual. Of the six texts meeting the AEA Report

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[27] Ibid., p.5.

[28] Ibid., p.5.

A. Criteria: Coverage (continued)

A-5. Treatment of economics as a social science omitting emphasis on the solution of problems of the individual (as consumer or producer) (continued)

Twelve Current Texts (continued)

criteria, four made no reference to the solution of individual problems, and two made only brief or passing references in keeping with the emphasis on treatment of economics as a social science.

A-6. Avoidance of disproportionate attention to individual topics

1959-60 Texts

The AEA economics texts subcommittee evaluated the texts as giving several topics (in addition to the "problems of the individual" emphasis) disproportionate attention. The subcommittee found that "Cooperatives receive a surprisingly large amount of space...Conservation is also a popular topic...accorded attention which one or more members of the subcommittee judge excessive." [29]

Twelve Current Texts

We evaluated five of the twelve texts as failing to meet this criteria, giving disproportionate attention to the topics mentioned by the economics texts subcommittee. One of the five texts devoted a full chapter of 29 pages to conservation; another devoted a full chapter to cooperatives. In all five

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[29] Ibid., p.6.

A. Criteria: Coverage (continued)

A-6. Avoidance of disproportionate attention to individual topics (cont.)

Twelve Current Texts (continued)

texts, the excessive coverage given to the topics of cooperatives and conservation contained undue emphasis on description at the expense of analysis. In the other seven texts, cooperatives were either not mentioned or given brief treatment. Three of the seven books did not treat the topic of "conservation" (nor was the term found in their indexes); the other four accorded reasonably brief, analytic treatment to the topic.

B. Criteria: Role of Analysis vs. Description

1959-60 Texts

The AEA Report felt there was a highly inappropriate emphasis on description at the expense of analysis. The subcommittee concluded that: "It is not our intention to disparage factual and institutional knowledge--indeed, much of what is presented is indispensable--but the extreme (dominance of description) which is exemplified in most of these texts must be deplored."[30] The overall committee Report found that: "Perhaps the most alarming characteristic of textbooks in all three courses (including economics) is the dominance of description over analysis in the treatment accorded those economic topics selected for discussion."[31]

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[30] Ibid., p.6.

[31] Ibid., p.x.

B. Criteria: Role of Analysis vs. Description (continued)

1959-60 Texts (continued)

Specifically, the subcommittee found that: "What has happened and what exists are depicted, often in absurd detail: the 'why' of matters is much less evident;"[32] and, "Not only is description dominant in the textual material, but summaries, questions, lists of terms and suggested topics for special reports--all of which appear at the end of chapters--appear to be designed to encourage memorization at the expense of thought and understanding." [33] In the case of the communist economic system much in need of an analytic approach, the subcommittee found that "...while all books pay passing heed to the Communist system, they do so only by way of dogmatic criticism, with little real exposition or understanding..." [34]

Twelve Current Texts

Our evaluation indicated that all twelve current texts have moved substantially away from the "dominance of description over analysis" that the AEA Report deplored. This, of course, is not to say that all unnecessary pockets of description have been eliminated, nor that the analysis is appropriate and adequate.

The increased focus on analysis is indicated by special treatment of the topic of "methodology", usually in the Introductory unit. Two of the texts devoted a full chapter to this topic; four gave it adequate treatment of

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[32] Ibid., p.6.

[33] Ibid., p.6.

[34] Ibid., p.3.

B. Criteria: Role of Analysis vs. Description (continued)

Twelve Current Texts (continued)

several pages; but the other six ignored the topic or gave it only brief, incidental treatment.

All the books adopted an essentially analytic approach to the communist economic system, without excessive emphasis on description. This is a substantial improvement over the subcommittee finding that "...while all books pay passing heed to the Communist system, they do so only by way of dogmatic criticism, with little real exposition or understanding." However, in only six of the twelve texts was the analysis really adequate and of a high order of quality in relation to the scope of the subject matter. Among the other six texts, aside from analytical shortcomings, four showed instances of "dogmatic criticism". In several texts the treatment of the topic is dominated by a defense of the U.S. economic system.

All of the twelve texts showed a concern for analysis (rather than memorization) in their end-of-chapter questions, exercises, etc. All of the texts differentiated their questions into two groups: (1) Review (memorization) questions; and (2) "Thought", or "Discussion", or "Problem", questions or activities. In the latter group, the focus was on analysis, thought, and understanding (though not always achieved).

C. Criteria: Quality and Competence of Analysis

1959-60 Texts

The AEA subcommittee report evaluated the quality and competence of analysis in the texts as being relatively poor, stating: "Where analysis is attempted, however, the subcommittee felt it was often misleading and even erroneous."[35] The subcommittee found that: "Standards (for quality of analysis) of scholarly journals are inappropriate, and were not applied; yet even standards set at much lower levels were frequently violated."[36] Supporting evidence in the report included the following:

1. "Choppiness, superficiality, and at times an almost maddening lack of rigor invited strong criticism. A common example is the use of 'right','fair', 'just', and 'equitable' without definition."[37]

2. The subcommittee selected the topic of "regulation of agricultural prices" as treated in the four "leading" texts, and found the level (quality) of analysis highly inadequate. Some of the major faults the report found were:

   a. failure to consider the policy alternative of resource allocation via the free market;

   b. the problem simply is not analyzed in terms of resource allocation;

   c. there is no attempt to evaluate the program; and

   d. little effort is made to distinguish between facts, analytic conclusions, and value judgments as basic elements involving different levels of controversy.

3. The subcommittee found that only two of the eight books "...contain reasonable analyses of the market determination of prices..."[38]

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[35] Ibid., p.6.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid., p.6.

[38] Ibid., p.3.

C. Criteria: Quality and Competence of Analysis (continued)

Twelve Current Texts

We feel the general level of quality and competence of analysis has improved substantially in the current texts. In evaluating the twelve current texts for "quality and competence of analysis", we selected the same topic, "regulation of agricultural prices", as did the subcommittee.[39] Of the twelve texts, six did an adequate job of analysis; the others varied from "almost acceptable" to poor.

In the analysis of market determination of prices, seven of the twelve texts did a reasonably adequate job; of the remaining five texts, four made creditable, but inadequate, attempts at analysis, while one was highly inadequate.

D. Criteria: Concern with System-Orientation and System-Content

1959-60 Texts

For the criterion of system-orientation, the subcommittee's evaluation stated that: "...all (texts) fell short of even reasonably adequate portrayal and interpretation of the nature and operation of economic forces. Most of the ingredients needed for system analysis are discussed, but their combination, action, and interaction are left largely to the reader's imagination."[40] Supporting evidence found by the committee included:

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[39] Two of the texts did not include an analysis of this topic; for these texts we chose alternate topics.

[40] "Economics in the Schools...," op.cit., p.2.

D. Criteria: Concern with System-Orientation and System-Content (continued)

1959-60 Texts (continued)

1. "The elementary discussion of market adjustment of demand and supply which characterized these books fails, with one possible exception, to convey a feeling for the nature, scope, and power of the forces of demand and supply which is needed to understand the economy."[41]

2. "...even the significance of profit for the operation of the system and the allocation of resources is neglected."[42]

3. "How these (separate) ingredients (of the economic system) are combined by the system to allocate resources, distribute incomes, and compose output in conformity to consumer demand is vaguely treated, if at all."[43]

Twelve Current Texts

We examined the twelve current texts on the basis of the three specific areas of evidence and found that five texts still fell short of "...even reasonably adequate portrayal and interpretation of the nature and operation of economic forces." Six texts show adequate performance, and one is marginal. We conclude that there has been improvement in concern with system-orientation among current texts, but that most of it is confined to about half of the texts.

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[41] Ibid., p.3.

[42] Ibid., p.2.

[43] Ibid., p.3.

E. Criteria: Value Judgments and Controversy

1959-60 Texts

The overall committee Report singles out value judgments, holding that texts should treat "...the nature of value judgments, their role in determining the objectives of an economy and the economic system developed to obtain them, how they differ from one country to another, and how they have changed and are changed over time..."[44] The evaluation of all texts is unfavorable, on the basis of the committee's finding that these topics "...are simply not discussed."[45] The subcommittee found that the economics texts put forth little effort "...to distinguish between facts, analytic conclusions, and value judgments as basic elements involving different levels of controversy."[46] In the overall committee Report the finding was put forth (regarding all three courses) that: "On obviously controversial issues, all points of view frequently emerge with equal standing regardless of basis or merit--matters which apparently warrant little discussion. Thus true controversy is never analyzed;..." [47]

Twelve Current Texts

While the current texts as a whole showed improvement, we found that seven of the twelve texts did not meet the criteria involving value judgments and controversy. These texts failed to mention or barely referred to the nature of value judgments, their relation to social and economic goals,

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[44] Ibid., p.xi.

[45] Ibid., p.xi.

[46] Ibid., p.7.

[47] Ibid., p.xi.

E. Criteria: Value Judgments and Controversy (continued)

Twelve Current Texts (continued)

and how they differed from facts and analysis. In these seven books there was simply no unique analytical focus on, or analytical concern with, the role of value judgments as related to economics, economic thinking, and economic policy. In the controversial topic we selected for examination, namely, the role of government, these books did not adequately treat the role of values in shaping policies and controversy, with adequate analytical handling of the respective roles of values, facts, and analysis. In several of the books the pro and con approach was adopted with no effort to assist the student in resolving the controversy.

Of the five texts meeting this criteria, three devoted one or more chapters of excellent quality to special treatment of the role and nature of value judgments in economics. Several of these books analyzed controversial issues with a great deal of specific attention to distinguishing among the roles of value judgments, facts, and analysis.

Comparative Evaluation of Current and 1959-60 Textbooks: Summary of Findings

Substantial improvement as a group.--In the previous section we evaluated the current texts in terms of ten individual criteria used in the AEA Report to evaluate the texts examined ten years ago. Viewing current texts as a group, we found substantial improvement over the 1959-60 texts in the case of every criteria.

The AEA Report found that in four of the ten criteria none of the 1959-60 texts

were adequate; and in six of the criteria no specific number was given, but the implication was definitely conveyed that virtually all of the texts were inadequate.

Compared to this bleak picture of deficiency, we evaluated roughly half of the current twelve texts as being adequate in nine of the ten criteria. In the remaining criterion, namely, the appropriate degree of emphasis on analysis relative to description, we felt that all twelve texts met the standard of at least marginal adequacy.[48]

Deficiencies in current texts concentrated among "first-generation" texts.--Although we found substantial improvement among the current texts, considered as a group, a significant bimodal distribution unfolded when individual texts were considered. Six of the current texts showed only minimal improvement in terms of adequacy relative to the AEA Report criteria. These six texts were evaluated as inadequate in most of the criteria. Four of the texts were deficient in nine of the ten criteria; one in eight of the criteria; and one in seven criteria. These texts evidenced a homogeneous group of attributes resembling, with some upgrading, the attributes of the 1959-60 generation of texts as reflected in the AEA Report's evaluation. Consequently, we designated the deficient group of current texts as "first-generation"texts.

We feel it is not accidental, then, that all six texts evaluated as inadequate had chronological roots proximate to the 1959-60 texts. Three of these texts were recent editions of original versions going back far beyond 1959-60;

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[48]But we entered the specific disclaimer that appropriate emphasis on analysis did not imply that all books evidenced adequate analysis. To try to be analytical is one thing, to succeed, another.

and the other three, first editions, had publication dates indicating they had been in the early stages of writing in 1961 or 1962. It is our feeling that these books are deficient at least in part because the writers accepted and used the basic first-generation model, or version, of the high school text which the AEA Report (not published until 1963) found deplorable. It is anomalous, of course, that most of these texts cited the National Task Force Report, published in 1961, as a standard and guide.

Improvement in current texts concentrated among "second-generation" texts.--By contrast (completing the bimodal distribution), we found almost all the improvement in current texts concentrated among the remaining six texts. Three of these texts were adequate in terms of meeting all ten of the AEA Report criteria; one was deemed adequate in nine of the criteria; one in eight of the criteria; and one in seven. In an overall evaluation, based on meeting the AEA Report criteria in scope and spirit, we felt that five of these texts were acceptable, and one was unacceptable--but only marginally so.

Again, we found that the acceptable five texts evidenced a homogeneous group of attributes, and we designated them "second-generation" texts. In essence, each writer had rejected the 1959-60 first-generation high school textbook model, and instead had adapted the current state-of-the-art of college textbook-writing to the high school level.[49] Further, it is interesting to note that each text was published in 1967 or later, reflecting at least the

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[49] It must be noted that the minimum criteria developed in the AEA Report originated from academic and discipline standards, and reflected experience growing out of the current state-of-the-art in college textbook-writing. Also, this is not to say that the five second-generation high school texts are not different from college texts--they are--but is is to say that the current state-of-the-art in college textbook writing and organization is clearly recognizable in these texts.

potential influence of the AEA Report; and each cited or implied the National Task Force Report as a guide. One final caveat: the high school texts, whether designed for one- or two-semester use, are typically short texts, and because of this constraint encounter inherent problems in meeting the minimum set of criteria, particularly with respect to coverage.[50]

Status of current textbooks--concluding remarks.--One is tempted to say, in fact we will say, that a quiet revolution in the high school texts has taken place in the past decade. It is now possible--as it was not ten years ago--to recommend to high schools a significant number of texts--five in our sample of twelve--which substantially meet the minimum criteria set by the canons of our professional discipline. But the battle is not yet won. Since these five texts are all relatively new, it will be interesting and instructive to see how they fare in market competition with the contemporary versions of the first-generation texts. It will also be significant to note if new editions of existing first-generation texts move closer to the second-generation model.

Explaining the Improvement of Current Texts: An Hypothesis

The education process is like a glacier, notoriously difficult to influence. How, then, can we explain the astonishing degree of upgrading of texts within the short space of ten years?

First, we hypothesize that the primitive, first-generation level of the 1959-60 high school text largely can be accounted for by the following

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[50] Our five second-generation texts varied from 430 to 530 pages, compared to almost 800 pages for the leading college texts. In addition, much of the high school text is devoted to photographic illustrations.

three situational elements:

1. Lack of formal economics training and appreciation of economics among teachers, school boards and the community. In this economics vacuum emphasis in texts on consumerism, patriotism, vocational selection, dull description without analysis, etc., were acceptable.

2. Little confidence in the students' ability to master, and the teachers' ability to teach, the essentials of economic analysis fundamental to economic understanding.

3. Acceptance of, and adjustment to, the status quo by textbook writers and publishers.

Second, we posit that since these three elements generated no autonomous change, we must look entirely to external forces, of which we argue that two played strategic roles in text upgrading. The first such force for change was the development of the innovative, post-World War II college text, with its new focus on aggregative economics. However, this was a necessary, but not sufficient, force because this model for textbook change already had been available for over ten years when the AEA Textbook study was performed in 1959-60. The second force, strategic and proximate to change, appeared to be the economic education movement. This movement operated within the institutional framework of the AEA and the Joint Council on Economic Education, and in the persons of a small group of dedicated economists whose professional and social responsibility led them to promote the cause of economic literacy in the schools. We hold that the strategic forces in the economic education movement operated on both the demand and supply sides of the text market.

On the demand side of the text market, the economic education movement was successful in developing an appreciation for "real" economic understanding among teachers, school boards, and the community. Crucially it developed a

willingness on the part of school personnel to undertake in-service training. And it was demonstrated that economic understandings could be mastered by youngsters, and, in turn, mastered and taught by their teachers.

On the supply side of the text market, publishers and authors responded to the content and approach criteria set forth by the economic education movement, and especially to the Report of the National Task Force. Most of the current texts we examined cited or implied that the National Task Force Report served as a guide to the content and approach of the text. It appears that strong competitive forces in the publishing industry reinforced the policy of upgrading in line with the new criteria suggested in the National Task Force Report. Of particular note was the entry as high school textbook authors of academic economists trained and experienced in the field of economic education. Most of the texts published in 1968 and 1969, have one or more authors with strong experience in economic education in addition to a formal economics Ph.D.

To sum up, we explain the improvement of the current high school texts on the basis of (1) the positive efforts of the economic education movement; and (2) the availability of the post-World War II college textbook model.

III. Current High School Texts: "Extended" Criteria and a Standardized Evaluation Procedure

The "Legitimacy" Issue

Success, like affluence, generates its own problems. The improvement in high school economics texts raises the following issues for the economists concerned: Is it our job to set only minimum criteria, such as those in the AEA Report, assuming that once these are met, the job is done? Or should we continue to develop "extended" criteria once the minimum criteria are widely met? We define "extended criteria" as including (a) further specification of the minimum criteria; and (b) additional criteria. Further, having become specialists in text evaluation, is it our task to assist the schools in choosing their texts?

We hold that there is a need for extended criteria, and also, for the development of a standardized evaluation procedure reflecting these criteria and facilitating the school's textbook choice process. In defense of this position we submit three arguments: (1) The "continuing responsibility" argument would have the schools say: "You got us into this--now we need your continued help." (2) The "continuing problem" argument is based on the fact that problems of choice by high school text selection committees still exist. In fact, the problems are more sophisticated since they now pose the question: How does one choose rationally among a number of texts each of which fulfills the minimum criteria? (3) The "specialized competence" argument offsets the notion that "as economists" we are not competent to develop extended criteria nor to assist in choice--a notion which may have had validity in the past. Our profession has developed the specialized area of economic education. We do

have economists who are familiar with high school textbooks, their conditions of use in the classroom, and their teacher users. We do have economists whose professional concern is with efficiency in the teaching of economics. Thus, we hold for the legitimacy of developing extended criteria and a standardized text-evaluation procedure to facilitate the choice of textbooks by schools. The notion of an evaluation procedure, or framework, it will be recalled, already has been presented implicitly in the AEA Textbook Report, for ultimately, this Report was concerned with textbook choice. It is to these problems of extended criteria and choice that we now turn.

Analytical Approach

The notions of extended criteria and choice require a more formal look at textbook evaluation--that it be translated into more abstract analytical concepts appropriate to handling the schools' textbook-choice problem. Let us consider the following analytical approach:

1. The textbook is a basic input in an economic education process.

2. The process output is "economic education" (as yet unspecified).

3. Other basic "cooperating" inputs in the process are associated with the users of the text, namely: Teachers and their methodology; students; and the specific educational environment.

4. The textbooks and other inputs have unique influences on economic education output, via a cause-effect relationship.

5. The textbook, as an input, has multiple attributes, which we describe in our criteria. Each of the attributes independently, or in association with other attributes, influences output.

6. Economic education output is difficult to specify, identify, discover, and measure. It can be approached via:

   a. Measurement of the effectiveness of cognitive skills in the acquisition and use of economic concepts.

   b. Developing behavioral objectives (e.g., intelligent voting) related to economic understanding and ascertaining the extent to which these are achieved.

   c. Ascertaining benefits and payoffs of events attributed (partially or wholly) to economic education (e.g., use of valid macro-economic understanding by a Republican President to "manage" the economy).

7. "Entrepreneurial" dimensions in terms of choice of text comprise: (a) the need of schools to choose the "best" text; and (b) the role of economists in assisting the choice process, thereby influencing economic education output.

8. A basic approach to the problem of text-choice would appear to be: (a) identifying and scaling both text attributes and economic education output; and (b) establishing the relationships between variations in attributes and variations in economic education output. But the problem is more complex. Crucially, the approach must take into account the fact that the level, quality, and other attributes of the cooperating inputs (teachers, students, etc.) affect the relationship we are concerned with--namely the effect of text attributes on economic education output. For example, an "ideal" text (in terms of economic education output) for bright students, will be a non-ideal text for slow students; an ideal text for a teacher with an M.A. degree in economics will be non-ideal for a poorly prepared teacher.

Workability of Minimum Criteria in Choosing a Text

It is important to recognize the sources of the reasonably clear-cut agreement on, and acceptance of, the minimum criteria, i.e., why they worked so well. First, academic economists could agree that the minimum criteria

contributed positively to economic education output.[51] This was precisely because the criteria were "minimum" in the sense of articulating generally accepted canons of methodology, inquiry, and definition of the discipline (analogous to "motherhood"). It was also because the minimum criteria were sufficiently general and unspecified, avoiding disagreement on such issues as: the appropriate trade-off, or balance, between depth of analysis on the one hand, and coverage on the other; and the value of the discipline-centered approach vs. the problem-centered approach.

Second, the minimum criteria were workable because the school users of the texts agreed to them. There were two dimensions to their agreement: (1) they agreed to take the "word" of the economists; and (2) they agreed to pay the "cost" (retraining teachers, etc.) of accepting the minimum criteria, with the expectation of gains in economic education output.

Third, the minimum criteria worked well because they were assigned the task, so to speak, of simply screening out below-minimum texts. They were not assigned the task of choosing the "best" text from a group of above-minimum texts.

Problems in Choosing a "Best" Text

There are very severe technical problems in assisting any school in choosing an "ideal" text from among a group fulfilling minimum criteria. Here

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[51] The agreement on criteria reflected also an implicit agreement on some minimum dimensions of economic education output.

the choice involves not a screening process, but actual comparisons of expected economic education output. Some of the fundamental problems are:

1. We do not have enough knowledge about economic education output to specify its dimensions and measure it. Moreover, there may be considerable differences between the school's notion of output and our own, even granting a mutual agreement on minimum and extended criteria.

2. Our knowledge of the relation of attributes of the text input to economic education output is highly imperfect. For example, what are the comparative effects on output of alternative forms of textbook organization, e.g., the principles approach vs. the problems approach? [52] And, equally crucial, we do not know enough about the relation of the attributes of cooperating inputs (e.g., degree of teacher preparation), to economic education output.

3. We are not in a position to estimate for schools the cost constraints associated with alternative texts, each meeting minimum criteria. For example, different costs of in-service training and teacher-resistance may be associated with vary-levels of analytical rigor and depth in the alternative texts.

Policy-Proposal for Textbook Evaluation Procedure Using Minimum and Extended Criteria

Yet, the fact is that each school does choose an "ideal" text, despite the difficulties of highly imperfect knowledge. The schools, each with different needs, require assistance that does not raise the spectre of "dictation" from above. We suggest that, as an aid to rational choice, a standardized evaluation procedure be developed. This evaluative procedure should include: minimum and extended text criteria and evidence-items for the criteria appropriate

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[52] This is not to imply that we have no knowledge in this area. For example, we know that a text which incorporates the attribute of programmed learning in its supply-demand analysis will be likely to generate a favorable effect on efficiency in producing economic education output.

for evaluation; provisions for assessment of each of the cooperating inputs (e.g., teacher preparation, etc.) and their estimated relationship to text attributes and economic education output; and at least a tentative definition by the school of economic education output.

The final requirement of the evaluative procedure is that it be flexible. Parts of the procedure can be completed in a highly specialized, centralized manner, e.g., compilation and evaluation of objective evidence (coverage, adequacy of analysis, etc.) concerning certain minimum or extended criteria. Other elements, particularly the assessment of local cooperating inputs (teachers, students, etc.) and, of course, the estimation of economic education output and the choice process, should be performed locally, school by school, with complete decentralization. Here local economists could assist the schools by feeding into the evaluative process the schools' preferences and estimates of evaluative elements (e.g., costs of retraining teachers), and by assisting in other aspects of the evaluative and choice process.

The standardized portion of the evaluation procedure could be developed and published in the form of a "cook-book" matrix, or set of matrices, and made available to Centers for Economic Education as a tool for assisting, upon request, schools choosing new texts. Essentially the decision-making process would consist of two steps: (1) Screening out texts not sufficiently meeting minimum criteria; and (2) Selecting from the remaining texts an "ideal" text for the individual school. Selection would be on the basis of extended criteria, local definition of output, and local assessment of the situation with respect to cooperative-inputs.

The basic arguments for the policy-proposal and the approach it embraces are:

1. The formal evaluation is, in itself, an education process. The very process and preliminaries of choice improve the competence of the choice-maker.[53] There will probably be some spill-over in producing more effective teaching as teachers become more familiar, and deal more explicitly, with text attributes.[54]

2. The procedure introduces additional rationality into the process of choice. The information on criteria, constraints, cooperating inputs, output, etc., will become more explicit. The centralized preparation of the text evaluation procedure, including objective evidence for each of the criteria, will enable more texts to be reviewed by each school. A "more perfect" market[55] for the purchase and sale of texts will be created.

4. In the long term, assuming the present responsiveness of the publishing industry, the process will produce texts more appropriate to the rationally revealed needs and preferences of the schools.

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[53]In a "pretest" before the institute, the teachers were given one-half hour to write down their criteria for evaluating texts. The group came up with a limited set of criteria. The same group, working through the institute had, within six or seven weeks, developed a much larger and more meaningful set of criteria.

[54]All the teachers in our textbook-evaluation institute experienced the spill-over benefits on their teaching and felt they were one of the benefits of the institute.

[55]Laurence E. Leamer developed the notion of creating a more perfect market via textbook analysis in his A Guide to the Selection of College Introductory Textbooks, State University of New York, Binghamton, New York. September, 1965. (Mimeo., unpaged).

IV. Explorations in Extended Criteria and Innovative Developments in the Current Second-Generation Texts

It is appropriate here to call attention to the pioneering work in college text evaluation of Laurence E. Leamer, on whom the writers have drawn heavily.[56] Many of the criteria presented in the following section were originally developed by Leamer. The problem of extended criteria and text evaluation still remains very much a pioneering area. In this section we present an exploratory classification and sample set of extended criteria, and then utilize these criteria to classify the innovative developments we have identified in our five selected second-generation texts.

Extended Criteria

Classification.--The extended (as opposed to minimum) criteria fall into three types, or classifications: (1) further specification of minimum criteria; (2) other-than-minimum criterion: economics-based; (3) other-than-minimum criteria: not economics-based.

Further specification of minimum criteria.--We shall list in this section a sample set of extended criteria which further specify the basic minimum criteria treated explicitly or implicitly in the AEA Report.[57]

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[56] See especially his A Guide to the Selection of College Introductory Economics Textbooks, op.cit. In addition, Dr. Leamer served as consultant to our 1969 textbook evaluation institute where his advice was of great value.

[57] The AEA Report criteria used in this section have greater scope than those used in the comparative evaluation section of this paper because not all the criteria were used in making the comparative evaluations.

Minimum Criteria	Extended Criteria--Further Specification of Minimum Criteria
A. Objectives and Purposes of the Text	A-1. What does the author say are the objectives and purposes of the text?
	A-2. What is the author's focus in the text's opening and closing emphasis?
B. Organization	B-1. What basic approach, or combination of approaches, does the text organization represent, e.g., Principles approach, Problems approach, etc.?[58]
	B-2. What unique organizing elements does the text use?
	B-3. Is the text cumulative or flexible in organization, i.e., can it be used in a sequence different from that presented?
	B-4. What is the sequence of micro- and macro-coverage? If macro is treated first, is simple supply-demand analysis presented prior to the macro- section?
	B-5. Are those problems selected for reasonable depth of treatment treated in conjunction with the analysis, if the book is Principles-oriented? Or are the problems treated located elsewhere, e.g., at the back of the book?
	B-6. If the book is problem-oriented (i.e., follows problem approach), is the sequence and organization of problems treated appropriate to adequate and logical development of the discipline-elements?
C. Role of Analysis	C-1. For each text topic, what analytical and descriptive elements are specified as criteria for adequate treatment? Is appropriate analytic treatment sacrificed to descriptive treatment? What are the "dimensions" of the "sacrifice" in terms of specific elements?

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[58] See Leamer, op.cit., for a detailed description of these and other approaches.

Minimum Criteria (continued)	Extended Criteria--Further Specification of Minimum Criteria (continued)
C. Role of Analysis (continued)	C-2. Topic by topic, what is the balance between exposition of analysis vs. actual application of analytical elements to real (or hypothetical) problems?
	C-3. Does author evaluate the adequacy of analytical tools presented? E.g., the adequacy of the classical vs. Keynesian models?
	C-4. Form and depth of analytical sophistication:
	a. What level of mathematics proficiency is needed to use the book profitably?
	b. Is the book flexible with respect to analytical sophistication? That is, are several levels of analytical rigor used with the users able to choose the desired levels without sacrifice of the usefulness of the text?
	c. Among a list of topics considered to have a comparatively high level of analytical sophistication, which are treated in the text?
	d. What formal kinds of analytical apparatus are developed in the text? (e.g., graphic supply-demand analysis; graphic determination of monopoly price). Is there supplementary or alternative verbal explanation? (i.e., b. above, should be applied here.)
D. Coverage	D-1. In reasonable detail, precisely what topics, concepts, problems, etc., are covered? What is the actual scope of coverage?

Minimum Criteria (continued)

D. Coverage (continued)

Extended Criteria--Further Specification of Minimum Criteria (continued)

D-2. Is the author explicit about the rationale employed in determining selectivity in coverage? What judgments or purposes underly the selectivity?

D-3. What "problems" are selected for treatment in reasonable depth?

D-4. Is there specific treatment of the methodology of economics as a social science?

a. Is there specific treatment of problem-solving methodology (e.g., 5 steps in problem solving) with a specific example of application?

b. Is the problem-solving methodology explicitly used and referred to in the treatment of specific problems throughout the text?

c. Is the connection between theory and application of theory in problem solving made clear in "theory", and in the actual treatment of problems in the text?

d. Are the roles of goals and values treated in relation to methodology?

D-5. Is the relation between micro- and macroeconomics specifically and adequately treated?

D-6. Are significant contemporary topics introduced and out-dated or less useful topics dropped?

D-7. Is the central problem of scarcity and choice given heavy emphasis and elaboration?

Minimum Criteria (continued)	Extended Criteria--Further Specification of Minimum Criteria (continued)
E. System-orientation	E-1. Is there any special treatment of system or system-analysis in the methodology section or elsewhere?
	E-2. Are any special techniques or apparatus (beyond the typical circular-flow apparatus) used to explain and develop the unique system-aspects of economics; to show the interrelationships among major aspects and components of the system? If so, are these cumulatively developed?
F. Correct and Appropriate Analysis; Handling of Controversial Issues	F-1. Has any implicit or unconscious bias crept into the analysis of controversial issues, e.g., poverty; alternative economic systems; role of government; role of minorities, etc.?

Other-than-minimum criteria: economics-based.--Here we suggest criteria covering aspects and dimensions of the text not included within the scope of the minimum criteria, but still related to the discipline of economics. This, of course, is an open-ended area, and the list presented is simply exploratory in nature:

Other-than-Minimum Criteria: Economics-Based

A. What does the author view as unique in his text?

B. Is the historical approach used to illustrate, strengthen, or supplement analytical elements?

C. Are elements from the history of economic thought presented? Are they related to specific topics or analytical elements in the text?

D. Is any effort made to treat the interrelation of economics with other social sciences and other areas of study?

Other-than-Minimum Criteria: Economics-Based (continued)

E. Is the case method used as part of the text?

F. Is there sufficient focus on the role and use of empirical data in economics? Is this treatment coordinated with the tables and charts presented in the text?

G. Are the graphic and other analytical apparatus explained fully and adequately in texts and/or captions?

H. Are the tables and charts explained and correlated with the text? Are they up-to-date? Are sources given?

I. Are there effective unit and chapter introductions and summaries?

J. Are passages from well known economic works integrated with the text?

K. Aids-to-learning

1. What is the quality and scope of the supplementary and correlative readings suggested in end-of-chapter or end-of-text bibliographies? Are they annotated?

2. What is the quality and adequacy of end-of-chapter questions and activities?

3. Is there a special glossary of terms or concepts? Is it cumulative?

4. How adequate is the index?

L. Is there an attempt to portray economic problems and policy-making in depth, concretely, and realistically?

Other-than-minimum criteria: non-economics based.--Our experience with a panel of students[59] discussing high school texts indicated that students, as

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[59]The textbook analysis institute referred to previously constituted a panel of 6 students (high and average performers in economics) to comment on their high school texts. The following elements came in for strong criticism: boring, repetitious, "dragged-out" writing; "talking-down" to students by using "candy bar" examples, artificial analogies (e.g., a satellite to explain the operation of the price system); books overly-long for one semester; poor, confusing explanation of graphs; trivial questions at end of chapter; phrases like "as we said on page...."; too many examples and too much detail; too much use of "Pro" and "Con".

well as their teachers, are concerned with text-criteria that are non-economics based. We feel these criteria are too important to be left entirely to the discretion of publishers and textbook authors--they deserve explicit identification and evaluation.

Other-Than-Minimum Criteria: Non-Economics Based

A. Readability and typographical quality. (Although Leamer states that reading difficulty can be measured by an index, or scale, one publisher who participated in the institute maintained that no scale could yet do justice to the problems involved in ascertaining readability , in contrast to reading difficulty.

B. Illustrations. What is the quality of the pictures or illustrations used? Are they simply put there for a change-of-pace, or are they intimately related to the text? Are persons, events, and dates identified in the captions? Are the captions given a teaching function to reinforce or highlight the text material?

C. Does the text arouse and foster the students' interest in economics? Is economics related to student concerns? To use Leamer's phrase, is the text "germinal or terminal" as far as the student is concerned?

D. Does the author "talk down" to the students, either directly or implicitly (e.g., by using real-life situations which students tend to ridicule)?

E. Is the book intended for a two-semester or one-semester course?

F. Are chapter lengths appropriate for assignment units?

Innovative Developments in Five "Acceptable" Second-Generation Texts

We have confined our probe for innovative developments to the five current second-generation texts evaluated as having met the minimum criteria posited in the AEA Report. Treating them as a group, we shall present their collective innovative developments, or attributes, in terms of our set of extended criteria.

By "innovative" we mean innovative with respect to high school economics texts.[60] We shall identify each innovative development as having appeared in "One Text" or, 'More Than One Text."

The fundamental implicit innovation, common to all five texts, of course, was their adaptation of the current state-of-the-art in college textbook-writing to the high school textbook. Within this innovational framework, then, let us examine further innovative developments, several of which, we feel, will themselves feed back as improvements to the parent state-of-the-art.

I. Further Specification of Minimum Criteria

A. Objectives and Purposes of the Text

Innovative development: The purpose of the text is stated in part as: "We do not offer a simple and definite set of 'answers' to these problems, but rather a way of thinking about them." (Emphasis in original.) We feel that the explicit statement of the notion of teaching "a way of thinking" represents an innovative development in the purposes and objectives of the high school text. (One Text).

B. Organization

1. Innovative development: There is no typical introductory unit, or chapter. Unit One, instead, is organized around the following four fundamental concepts, each given a chapter: Economic Scarcity; the Nature of Economic Choice; the Concept of Economic Specialization; and the Principle of Economic Organization (i.e., custom, authority, market). (One Text).

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[60] We do not claim that each "innovative development" listed had no prior roots. We did not search all extant texts. We are merely calling attention to the existence, not necessarily the origination, of innovative treatment.

I. Further Specification of Minimum Criteria (continued)

B. Organization (continued)

2. Innovative development: Organization of the text encompasses a heavy focus on economic growth per se with one unit of four chapters devoted to this topic. (Stability, normally included with growth in most texts, is treated elsewhere.) Treatment of certain growth-related "problems", e.g., technology, education, urbanization, is included in the unit.
(One Text).

3. Innovative development: Specific problems, e.g., "How Dangerous is Creeping Inflation", "How Much Economic Competition is Desirable", etc., are presented as an integral last section of almost every chapter. Following the problem, a spectrum of positions is presented, and the student is expected to develop his own position following a final sub-section entitled, "Considering an Answer."
(One Text).

C. Role of Analysis

1. Innovative development: Major emphasis is laid on evaluation of the adequacy of an analytical model--the "classical model" throughout the area of micro-economics; and the adequacy of this model compared to the Keynesian model in macro-economics. This analytical emphasis actually comprises an organizational theme of the text.
(One Text).

2. Innovative development: By high school text standards, a comparatively high degree of analytical sophistication is introduced via intensive use of the graphic model of national income analysis.
(One Text).

D. Coverage

1. What topics, concepts, problems, etc., are covered? What is the actual scope of coverage?

Innovative development: The notions of general- and partial-equilibrium models are explained and illustrated.
(One Text).

I. Further Specification of Minimum Criteria (continued)

D. Coverage (continued)

Innovative development: The concept of third-party costs and benefits and their relation to market prices and effect on the functioning of the economy is introduced.
(One Text).

Innovative development: In the GNP chapter, the "flow of product" and "earnings and cost" approaches to GNP are fully developed.
(One Text).

2. Is the author explicit about the rationale employed in determining selectivity in topic coverage? What judgments or purposes underly the selectivity?

Innovative development: In the preface there were explicit statements of the text's rationale in determining selectivity in topic coverage (examples from two texts):

"We have therefore sought to present only what would be most useful to students beginning their study of economics. We have tried to focus on the most fundamental analytical tools and to present only the relevant factual and institutional information that the student will need and be able to use in applying these analytical tools to significant problems. Our guide has been the canon: Nothing unnecessarily difficult, but nothing that later has to be unlearned as wrong."

"Its (this book's) emphasis is on analysis...While not neglecting economic institutions...the authors have chosen to stress the 'how' and the 'why' of our economic system...(This book) treats selected subject matter in depth. Fewer topics are stressed, but more issues are pointed up."

3. Is there specific treatment of the methodology of economics as a social science?

Innovative development: Methodology in economics receives heavy emphasis, with individual chapters being devoted to: methodology, per se; and to the specific problem of handling values and social goals. Innovative topics include: the concept of a system; the nature of a model; conflict among personal goals and among social goals; and differences of opinion over means to achieve goals.
(More Than One Text).

I. Further Specification of Minimum Criteria (continued)

D. Coverage (continued)

Innovative development: There is heavy emphasis in showing how the simple graphic supply-demand model is developed and applied to real situations. The focus is on application and use of theory to make theory meaningful.
(One Text).

Innovative development: The text includes not only a description of the specific steps in economic reasoning (in choosing the best policy to solve a problem), but also an illustrative $2\frac{1}{2}$ page case study showing the student how these steps are actually applied and the problem solved.
(One Text).

Innovative development: The statement of national economic goals is broadened from the usual treatment (e.g., efficiency, economic security and justice, etc.) to include "world economic development and freedom."
(One Text).

4. Are significant contemporary topics introduced and less-appropriate topics dropped?

Innovative development: A chapter is developed treating the special role of science and technology in growth, including such topics as innovation, research and development, technological change, and public policy.
(One Text).

Innovative development: The topic of efficiency in government is introduced, including a section on "improving government's efficiency through benefit-cost analysis."
(One Text).

Innovative development: A chapter entitled, "Urbanization and Resource Allocation" is developed. This is not the typical text treatment of the urbanization problem, but a unique presentation of the elements of urban economics, with a focus on the allocation of resources among cities, and a treatment of the economy as a "system of urban centers."
(One Text).

I. Further Specification of Minimum Criteria (continued)

D. Coverage (continued)

Innovative development: A chapter is devoted to the process of policy-making, including such topics as social values, the roles of the President and Congress; and competing interest groups.
(One Text).

Innovative development: The traditional chapter on U.S. agriculture and the farm problem has been dropped, while poverty, personal security, and urban problems have been added.
(More Than One Text).

Innovative development: Special coverage is given to practical problems in economic policy-making in the area of monetary and fiscal policy, including such topics as:information lags and forecasting; lags in decision-making; and lags in affecting the economy.
(One Text).

Innovative development: A chapter is devoted to economic forecasting, including explanation and illustrative use of a simple econometric model.
(One Text).

Innovative development: Treatment is given to the economics of peace, the opportunity costs of war, and national defense and disarmament.
(More Than One Text).

5. Is the central problem of scarcity and choice given heavy emphasis and elaboration?

Innovative development: There is heavy emphasis on the treatment of scarcity and choice, with entire chapters being devoted to the topics.
(More Than One Text).

E. System-orientation

1. Is there any special treatment of system or system-analysis in the methodology section or elsewhere?

Innovative development: The concept of a system is treated in the methodology section.
(One Text).

I. Further Specification of Minimum Criteria (continued)

E. System-orientation (continued)

2. Are any special techniques or apparatus used to explain and develop the unique system-aspects of economics; to show the interrelationships among major aspects and components of the system?

Innovative development: The typical introductory circular-flow model is expanded in a series of diagrams to explain the role of government, savings, and investment in the economy; elementary flow charts are used to show relationships among interrelated elements, e.g., to show the components of purchasing power comprising total demand. (More Than One Text).

II. Other-than-minimum criteria: Economics-based

A. Are elements from the history of economic thought presented? Are they related to specific topics or analytical elements in the text?

Innovative development[61]: Elements of economic thought are presented as one-page vignettes, or brief essays, on the life and thought of great economists usually with an accompaning sketch or picture of the economist. One book, for example, includes vignettes on: Adam Smith, Alfred Marshall, David Ricardo, John Stuart Mill, John Maynard Keynes, Joseph Schumpeter, Karl Marx, and a combined vignette on Galbraith, Rostow, and Friedman as "...three Americans who have contributed ideas to contemporary economic thought." In this particular book, the equivalent of 8 pages are devoted to economic thought. Each vignette is carefully coordinated to accompany an appropriate text topic. For example, Schumpeter's vignette, appears in the text section devoted to "the role of innovation in growth"; Marx's occurs in context with the treatment of "how communism operates"; Marshall's in conjunction with the topic, "how the concepts of demand and supply are used by economists to explain how prices are determined in markets." (More Than One Text).

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[61] This "innovative element" is present in certain of the current texts we classified as first-generation texts. However, we are presenting this element because of its uniqueness--typically such treatment is not found in college-level texts.

II. Other-than-minimum criteria: Economics based (continued)

B. Is any effort made to treat the interrelation of economics with other social sciences and other areas of study?

Innovative development: A significant effort in one book is devoted to showing the relationship of economics with other fields of study. The book devotes a 2-page spread to each of 6 related fields of study. Crucially, it treats each of the related fields in conjunction with an appropriate, significantly related, economic topic. For example: Anthropology is treated in conjunction with the study of scarcity and division of labor with an illustration of its study of the Eskimo culture. Geography is treated in the section on urban economics, and features the geographical "central-place theory." Business Administration is treated in conjunction with the chapter on Business Enterprise, and deals with the notion of corporate accounting. Political Science is presented in conjunction with the process of policy-making through the topic, "Sugar and the Quota System." Sociology is treated with the topic of underdeveloped countries by using as an example, studies of the social structure of the villages of India. (One Text).

C. Charts

Innovative development: An interrelated sub-set of charts is presented as one large chart to cover many aspects of a complex phenomena, e.g., Trends in American Agriculture, accompanied by a sizeable explanatory caption. In the case of Agricultural Trends, 4 charts and one major caption are combined on one page.
(More Than One Text).

Innovative development: Some charts and graphic illustrations have captions including, in addition to explanation, a series of questions or activities for the student, much like those at the end of the chapter. Presumably this is to encourage an active, rather than passive, learning situation.
(One Text).

D. Are passages from well-known economic works integrated with the text?

Innovative development: Passages (brief readings) from the works of well-known economists and writers on economics, past and contemporary, are presented as brief features (typically one-half to one page in length), and coordinated with the text material, with an introductory sentence or two by the text author.
(One Text).

II. Other-than-minimum criteria: Economics-based (continued)

E. Aids-to-learning

Innovative development: Text contains an excellent nine-page bibliography, annotated, with general references (including background items useful in the study of economics) as well as specific references coordinated with text coverage. Contains pamphlets and periodicals as well as books. Located at end of text.
(More Than One Text).

Innovative development: A seven-page section at the end of the text describes chronologically, in a brief paragraph each, forty-five "Economic Landmarks in American History", beginning with the 1791 Report on Manufactures, through the creation in 1966 of the U.S. Department of Transportation.
(One Text).

F. Is there an attempt to portray economic problems and policy-making in depth, concretely, and realistically?

Innovative development: In-depth, realistic case-studies are provided to illustrate concretely the concepts, models, and topics treated in the text. For example, the topic of economic policy-making is supplemented by the case of the Employment Act of 1946 (a detailed nine-page treatment); and supply-demand analysis is supplemented using the case of Fairchild Camera and Instrument Corporation stock.
(More Than One Text).

III. Other-than-minimum criteria: Non-economics based

A. Readability and Typography

Innovative development: It was our judgment that several of the five second-generation texts developed eminently high levels of readability and typographical quality. Normally this would not rank as an innovative development--but considering the abysmal quality of the first-generation texts in this respect, we feel that this development warrants the qualifier of "innovative."
(More Than One Text).

III. Other-than-minimum criteria: Non-economics based (continued)

B. Illustrations

Innovative development: Photographs are used to achieve a unique stimulative and teaching function. One text typically used photos in sets of two or three, with each photo visually, or by brief caption, implying a strong relationship, or connection, with the other photos in the set. The student's interest and curiosity is aroused by the common elements, and he is attracted to read the seven or eight line caption underneath the entire set to learn the "story" relating, or "making sense" of, the photo set. The caption usually explains a principle or concept which underlies the specific "instances" represented by each photo.
(One Text uses the photo-sets); (More Than One Text use the extensive "teaching" captions).

Innovative development: Photographs are used to convey, in a very natural manner, and with great sensitivity, a sense of identity and participation in economic life in the case of minority groups. Persons from minority groups, especially Negroes, are neither systematically excluded from photographs, nor are they given obviously artificial or "showpiece" treatment.
(More Than One Text).

Innovative development: Some photograph captions end with a "think" question after completing the explanatory principle or concept.
(One Text).

C. Does the text arouse and foster the student's interest (and continued interest) in economics? Is it "germinal" or "terminal"?

Innovative development: "Germinal" final chapters are developed on "using what you have learned of economics"; on "the continued study of economics"; and on "economics as a profession."
(More Than One Text).

V. Concluding Observations

Presumably there is now cause for rejoicing in the land. The economic education movement can bask in the encomium, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." The high school economic texts as a group have been substantially upgraded. Among them we have a reasonable number of entirely acceptable ones. And, finally, the hope of the AEA Textbook Study Committee has been realized, namely, that "...one result of the present report will be an improvement in the quality of textbooks..." All's well that ends well. But in our moment of rejoicing we must, to use Keynes' phrase, make certain "mild preparations" for the future.

Imbalances Created

Teacher-preparation.--Success in improving the high school texts has upset, to put it candidly, the previously-existing neatly balanced educational equilibrium between inadequately prepared teachers on the one hand, and incompetent textbooks, on the other. Our profession's efforts have created a severe imbalance--the quality of the acceptable texts now runs strongly ahead of the typical teacher's preparation in economics.[62]

Accordingly, we must allocate more economic education resources to upgrade the economics preparation of high school economics teachers. It is questionable whether this task, like that of the texts, can be accomplished substantially within a decade. The path of greatest efficiency is via the Schools of Education,

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[62] Recent studies by George Dawson and Milton Baum have documented the low level of preparation in economics of high school social studies teachers.

in upgrading, in quality as well as quantity, the college economics requirements for future teachers of social studies. (At the same time, of course, we should not neglect the in-service training needs of existing teachers.) The foundation for this effort already has been laid by the publication in 1966 of College Preparation for Teaching Economics: Report and Recommendations.[63]

We must be watchful for a possible reaction in some school quarters against the second-generation texts because of their impelling, though implicit, demand for increased teacher-preparation in economics. For schools and teachers, there is always the alternative of retrogression, seeking refuge in the stagnant pools of description and the murky backwaters of incompetent, inadequate analysis. Retrogression means that the inquiring mind of the student will again be put down and repelled by excessive emphasis on description. But obfuscating analysis is more subtle. To the young mind untrained in economics it has the mesmerising sheen of simplicity, overlaid with glibness. But it conveys no understanding, no insight. It confuses and ultimately silences the student's spirit of inquiry. Retrogression will bring down on the classroom the curtain of darkness behind which incompetence is king. These are strong words, but note the phrase used in the AEA Report to describe the analysis found in the first-generation texts, namely, "...a maddening lack of rigor." If the analysis had a "maddening" effect on a trained economist, imagine the confusion conveyed to the student. To sum up: the battle for adequate texts is not yet won. The profession must be ready to combat the possibility of retrogression with effective programs to improve teacher-preparation in economics.

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[63] College Preparation for Teaching Economics. Report and Recommendations of an Advisory Seminar to the California State Department of Education. Sacramento: California State Department of Education, November 1966. This report is available from the Joint Council on Economic Education.

The teaching of economics in grades K through 11.--The teaching of economics in grades K through 11, can provide a foundation for the teaching of the 12th grade course in economics. Thus, the contribution of the new second-generation economics texts to a meaningful and adequate 12th grade economics course will be much more effective if the social studies taught in grades K-11 are based on improved economics teaching, texts, and materials. For example, the new Social Sciences Education Framework in California, provides for systematic teaching of economics in grades K through 11, with the 12th grade economics course serving in the additional role of a capstone course.

The profession has devoted attention to the teaching of economics in grades K through 11. Now, with the improved economics texts, it will have to increase its efforts in this area. Of course, effective teaching of economics in grades K through 11 will, in turn, imply some adjustments in the second-generation 12th grade economics texts, just as effective use of these texts, in turn, will imply adjustments for the college introductory course.

Monolithic Virtues and "Other-side-of-the-coin" Defects

In an unpublished talk to a religious group, Kenneth Boulding once made the point that people don't mind being criticized and taken to task for their sins, in fact they are quite complacent about it; but when one criticizes them for what they consider to be their virtues, they become profoundly upset and disturbed. Let's look at the virtues of our five acceptable second-generation texts in this light, or, more generously, let us look at them from the kinder point of view that every virtue may contain its own defect.

Our basic proposition is that since the second-generation high school texts are intellectual progeny of the post-World War II-model college text, they carry

with them not only the virtues (which are considerable) of this model, but also the defects as well. And this despite an admirable degree of innovation and adaptation of this model in the high school texts.

Monolithic academic-orientation.--There is little question that the texts' twin virtues of analytical economic competence and insightful intellectual treatment of highly complex economic issues bless the students. But, unfortunately, these blessings are confined to students who are capable of reading and understanding the texts, that is, to students with reasonably strong academic capability. Even with adequate teachers, these texts would not be effective for the below-average student, the slow-reading student, and the culturally disadvantaged student.[64] The author of one of the five acceptable second-generation texts states candidly in his Preface that: "This volume has been written for the above-average student in economics." And this particular book is not the most "difficult" of the five texts. We are neither arguing that the below-average students cannot master basic elements of economic analysis, nor are we arguing that they need a non-analytic approach. We are simply stating that it is enormously difficult for one type of text to serve the varied needs of all student users. Unfortunately, our five texts share the common virtue (and implied defect) of being highly appropriate for the above-average, academic strata of students. A crying malallocation of resources exists when all five acceptable second-generation economics texts are aimed at one strata of student users. In this case, truly, the poor(learners)do, indeed, pay more.

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[64]This is not to say that the first-generation texts would be effective in these situations. Actually, the first-generation texts are effective for neither the academically strong nor the academically weak.

How can such a glaring malallocation have come into existence and persist (though hopefully not for long)? Don't we have a reasonably perfect market to discover and provide for the needs of the slower students? The state of the economics texts ten years ago speaks eloquently for the gross imperfection of knowledge on the demand side--that is, the school side--of this market. And as for the supply side--the side of the economic education movement--well, progress is slow, and we produce, write, and do what we know. And, so far, our knowledge has been derived from a college text-writing state-of-the-art oriented exclusively to academically-strong students. We trust the implications for resource allocation and innovation in textbook writing are clear.

Monolithic approach.--Our second criticism is more an expression of concern, a strong feeling of uneasiness about the current college text-writing state-of-the-art. The college texts show a monolithic response to the criteria of coverage and organizational approach. Thus, all five second-generation texts, again reflecting the college model, tend to be very broad, almost encyclopedic[65] in coverage. Further, all have a strong "Principles", or "discipline-centered" organizational approach (as contrasted, for example, to a basically problem-organized or problem-centered approach). Our concern is with the monolithic sameness of the five high school "text-solutions". Our concern is with the lack of innovation and experimentation leading to pluralism in the fundamental approach. Has it been shown beyond any need for further experimentation that the broadly-encyclopedic, discipline-organized approach to text-writing is ideal? With respect to the college texts, the market has rendered the verdict

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[65] We say "almost" because these texts have only under 500 pages in which to be encyclopedic, while the college model has about 800 pages.

that the broadly-encyclopedic, discipline-organized approach is the dominantly preferred product. But certainly our experience with textbook markets engenders small confidence in their perfection. Surely the high school, with its more flexible teaching environment, its freedom from the rigid lecture approach, its need to reach diverse types of students, is an appropriate place for experiment.

* * *

In conclusion, our new look has revealed a strong beach-head of competence and adequacy established by the second-generation texts. This was their mission and this they accomplished. As for the defects and the tasks yet remaining, we feel it is entirely appropriate for the profession in the decade of the '70's to anticipate and help develop not only a third-generation of high school texts, but also a new generation of teachers adequately trained to use them.